BISHOP SIDNEY LAWRENCE ENNIS

A giant is dead! We are privileged in our lifetime to be exposed to the wisdom and spiritual vitality of a chosen few men who are especially selected by God for the building of His kingdom. Bishop Sidney Lawrence Ennis was one of those men.

Bishop Sidney L. Ennis was born to Adolf and Ophelia Ennis, March 1, 1893 in New Orleans, Louisiana. Bishop Ennis was raised by his grandparents who had already reared sixteen children. They were tired but like a Moses, God had a plan for his life. Being an only grandchild he found his friends among the chickens, ducks, and horses. He would sing, hold prayer meetings and preach to them. When one died he would have a funeral service and bury it.

Sidney would work very hard on the farm but he still found time to run errands for the neighbors in the community. While trying to please all, including his grandparents he was often misunderstood and received punishments because of things said about him.

At the age of thirteen, Sidney was baptized in the Baptist church under the leadership of Rev. Woods. He was very faithful in the church services. The pastor saw much good in him and appointed him leader of the B.Y.P.T.U. at the age of fourteen. He served faithfully for one year and six months until he decided to leave home to make a life for himself at the early age of fifteen and one-half years.

Desiring an education, he worked his way through school. This required working during the day and going to private school at night. At the age of eighteen he was called into the armed service where he served eighteen months of ground duties overseas. He was discharged with an honorable discharge; he went into the Secret Service and served there for eight years. After serving his country, he felt the need for a spiritual life. As the wise man Solomon said, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it", Proverbs 22:6. The teaching and work he had done in the church in his early life stayed with him and he felt the need of reaching out and up for a better way of life. He reunited with the Baptist church and served in every capacity of the church. Later he moved to another city where there was no church. He saw and felt the need for the people to have a place to worship; a building was erected and a church was organized. Through years of faithful service he was elected the moderator of Washington and Oregon. He remained in this position until the Lord saved him.

Elder Ennis was saved in the year 1921 when he was invited to visit a holiness church in Weed, California. The pastor was Bishop I. Finley who was out of town at the time. The following is his own personal account:

"In the year 1921 he had an appointment to preach at one of his churches, while waiting for the hour, he was invited by a friend to go with him to the holiness church in Weed, California, pastored by Bishop I. Finley. The service was great. I shall never forget the scripture that touched my heart; Titus 2:11-12. "For the Grace of God that bringeth Salvation hath appeared to all men. Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and Godly, in this present world." I had read this scripture before but I understood it very clearly when this preacher expounded it.

Even as a leader with a well organized church and a choir that knew just when to come in with a song during or after my message, deep down in my heart I felt the need of a deeper walk and a better way of life. I received a lot of compliments and handshakes, many were converted through my messages but I had habits I didn't like. I believed the word and it had its effect in my life. When I came to myself I was a new creature, sanctified and filled with the Holy Ghost. I gave up three churches and two states, and haven't regretted nor returned. My new life in Christ fulfilled and satisfied my desire."

After his experience with the Lord, Elder Ennis preached his first message as a holiness preacher, Psalm 119: 9-11. "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy word. With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from Thy commandments. Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." His text was "Thy word have I hidden in my heart." Through this message one of his fellow Baptist ministers was saved.

Six months later Elder Ennis went to Oroville, California; the church was run down, the door was locked; he was blessed to reopen and revive the church. The Lord set His approval on the work there. Within the space of one year and eight months the membership increased to eighty-five; twenty-five were saved and filled with the Holy Ghost. Being a working man, his job called him to Quincy, California. He moved there and found no church. Elder Ennis went to work; he built a church and organized the work. In the year 1924 the Overseer took the church and gave it to Elder H. Y. Rogers. Still determined to do a job for the Lord, Elder Ennis took courage from Genesis 26:22 and digged again. In the year 1925 he had a leading to come to Richmond, California where he found a little band of saints with no church. Elder Harrison would come out from Oakland once or twice a month. Elder Ennis was led to gather the saints and organize a church. That church is now the McGlothen Temple COGIC. After leaving there, Elder Ennis went to Pittsburg, California for a period of six months. Due to conditions he couldn't get a building, so he left and went to Vallejo. He preached out and organized a church which is now known as All Nations COGIC. Leaving Vallejo, he felt the need to go back to Pittsburg because there was a job to be done.

Adhering to one of his often quoted sayings, "A quitter never wins, and a winner never quits," he took courage and with much fasting and praying, a good wife working by his side (Sister Eura Lee Ennis) he stayed with the task. Many days and nights he and sister Ennis slept on the highway due to heavy fog. Sometimes they couldn't even leave the church because all four tires on the car (1924 Dodge) had been slashed. At other times sugar was put in the gas tank or all the gas siphoned out. Yet, through all the suffering,today there are four churches in Pittsburg.

Elder Ennis' labor was not in vain; he was able to pay the rent and other expenses until the Lord saved others to help carry on. He later resigned and came back to Richmond, preaching on the streets until such time property was purchased and a church was built on Carlos Avenue. The Lord saved, filled, and backsliders were reclaimed. The Lord abundantly blessed, miracles were wrought and the church increased . . . After eight years, the Lord called sister Eura Lee from labor to reward, but her sacrifices and her work live on. As Job of old, Elder Ennis accepted this by being encouraged with "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; Blessed be the name of the Lord."

True to word, the Lord took, but He gave. Elder Ennis gave himself over to the will of God. He continued working in the Lord's vineyard, asking for guidance and direction. The Lord blessed him with a good, noble woman, his present wife, Sister Ardella Ennis. His ministry increased, but due to redevelopment, the church had to move from Carlos Street to 8th Street and from 8th Street to the present location, 530 South 15th Street. The church has recently been remodeled and will accomodate approximately 325 people; four choirs that sing with the anointing, a fine group of ministers and members.

Stability has been one of Bishop's prime virtues. He has served under five different Bishops: (1) Bishop Driver (2) Bishop Wilson (3) Bishop Crouch (4) Bishop E. B. Stewart (5) Bishop B. R. Stewart. He served on the ordination board for 29 years. He was President of the Evangelists, Vice President of Missions, Chairman of the finance board and many other places. He was district Superintendent of the Greater Richmond District, Chairman of the Executive Board and pastor of Ennis Chapel Church of God in Christ. He pastored Ennis Chapel for thirty years.

In his passing he leaves a devoted wife, Ardella; four sons, Willie Williams of Compton, California, Hurthel Jackson of Los Angeles, California, Sidney Ennis, Jr., a student at the University of Hawaii and Dale Ennis of Richmond and a host of other relatives and friends.

MEMORIAL SERVICES

of

BISHOP SIDNEY LAWRENCE ENNIS

Friday, August 2, 1974 – 8:00 P.M.

Ennis Chapel Church of God In Christ
530 So. 15th Street
Richmond, California

Officiators – Elder Wm. D. Anderson – Elder P. Jefferson

Organ Prelude
Invocation – Elder M. Tyson
Scripture – Old Testament – 51st Psalm – Elder Cox
Scripture – New Testament – I Corinthians 15:19-28 – Elder B. Bolds
Selection – Ennis Chapel – "Keys To The Kingdom"

Expressions:

Local	*District*
Min. C. Myers	*Eld. P. Jefferson*
Miss. Miss L. Williams	*Miss M. Smith*
Trustee Sis. H. Anderson	*D. A. Thomas*
Deacon Bro. Farr	*Sis. B. Thomas*
Mother's Board–Mother Thomas	

Favorite Song – "Running For Jesus" – Sis. Rosie Henderson
Expressions: Miss G. Smith
Auxiliaries – Sis. Henderson
As A Son – Min. Pree
Children's Time
Expressions: Congregation & Friends
Resolution – Elder John E. Williams
Closing Expressions – Officiators
Congregational Song – "Jesus Said It"

OBSEQUIES

of

BISHOP SIDNEY LAWRENCE ENNIS

Saturday, August 3, 1974 – 11:00 A.M.

McGlothen Temple Church Of God In Christ
1443 Filbert Street
Richmond, California

Processional
Scripture Reading – Old Testament – Psalm 51: 1-12 – Supt. M. Lee
New Testament – I Corinthians 15:19-28 – Elder Sam Chifton
Invocation – Supt. W. Hall
Selection – N. California State, Ennis Chapel Choir – "Keys To The Kingdom"
Reflections: (Two Minutes Each)
Representing – Ennis Chapel – Elder Wm. Anderson
Representing – So. California – 2nd Bishop E. E. Cleveland
Representing – Northwest – Bishop S. R. Martin
Representing – North Central – Bishop G. Ross
Representing – Central Valley – Bishop W. S. Wilson
Representing – Pastors N. California – Supt. C. M. Levias
Representing – District Supt. – Supt. V. F. Devers
Representing – Greater Richmond District – Asst. Supt. Elder P. Jefferson
Selection – N. California State and Ennis Chapel Choirs – "Lord Help Me To Hold Out"
Expressions: (Two Minutes Each)
Representing – District Missionaries
Missionary G. Smith
Representing Women's Dept.
Northwest California – Mother M. McGlothen
North Central – Mother P. Wilburn
Central Valley – Mother A. Woods
North California First – Mother E. M. Devers
Resolutions:
Ennis Chapel – Elder John Williams
N. California First Jurisdiction – State Secy. – J. W. Williams, Jr.
Acknowledgement of Cards, Telegrams, Condolences
Obituary – Supt. L. B. Johnson
Solo – "Just To Behold His Face" – Sis. N. Levias
Eulogy – Bishop B. R. Stewart
Viewing of Remains
Music – "Running For Jesus A Long Time"
Recessional

– Interment –
Rolling Hills Memorial Park
Richmond, California

We wish to express for the family, their gratitude for your kindness in thought and deed, and for your attendance at the memorial service.

STEWART'S

Rose Manor Funeral Service

Funeral Director – Mortician

JOHN R. STEWART

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